

Local Roads Pavement Rating Communication Assessment

Prepared for:

Local Roads and Streets Council

Prepared by:

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Methodology – Quantitative Research

- The initial goal was to interview at least one respondent from 500 different municipalities. A total of 1,208 respondents participated in the survey, from approximately 1091 different municipalities.
- A special effort was made to contact specific municipalities, including the counties and cities with the largest populations, and those municipalities which did not comply with the initial regulation.
- The survey was conducted between February 26 and March 29, 2003. A copy of the questionnaire is appended to this report.

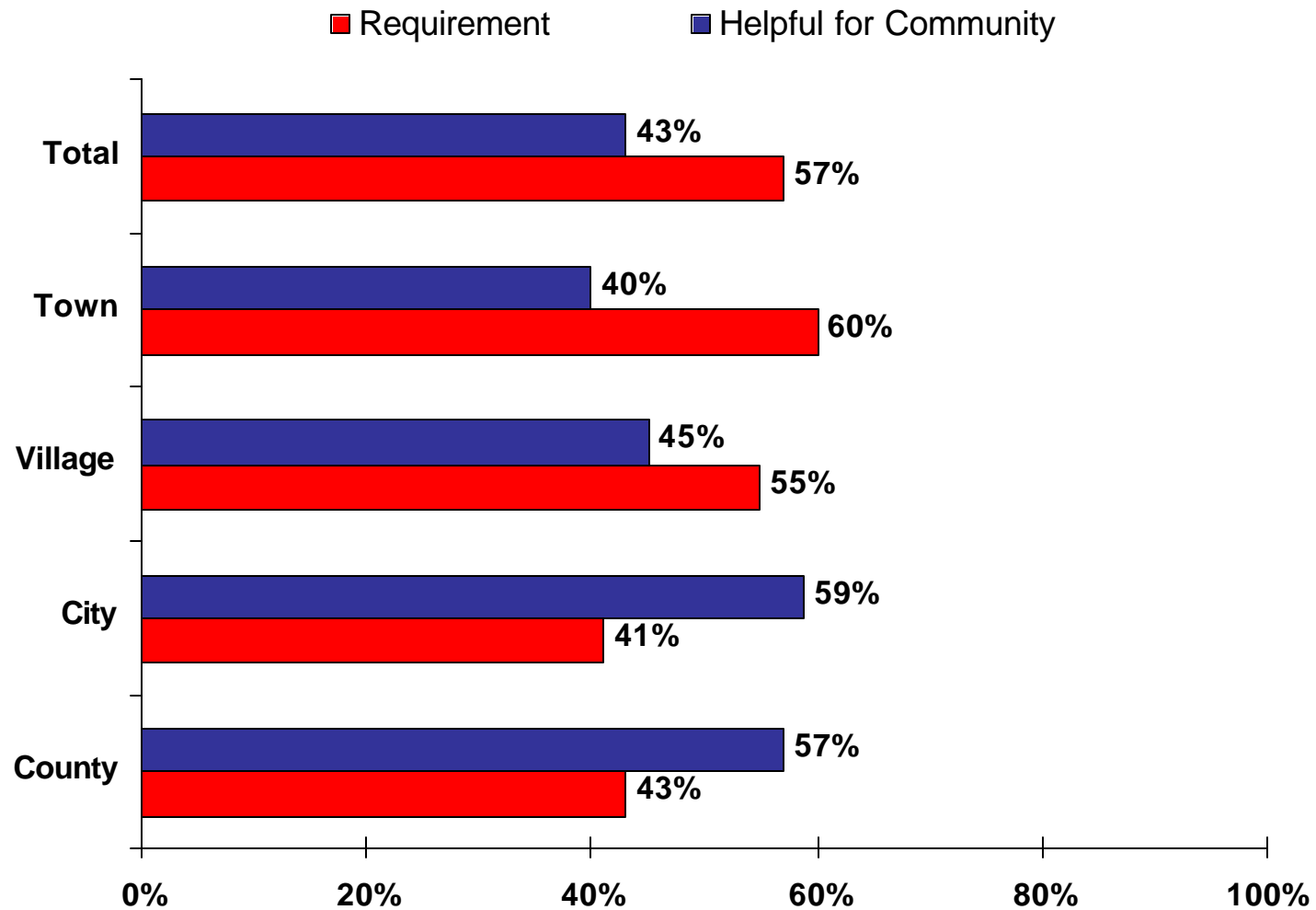
Findings – Local Roads Pavement Rating Program

Main Reason For Compliance*

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Village</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Requirement	63	64	61	66	43
Help with local decisions	11	11	11	14	11
Learn about road conditions	10	9	10	11	16
Beneficial for community	8	7	11	9	9
Avoid penalty / loss of funding	5	6	4	5	5

*Only most frequent mentions listed

Perception of Road Assessment as Helpful or Requirement

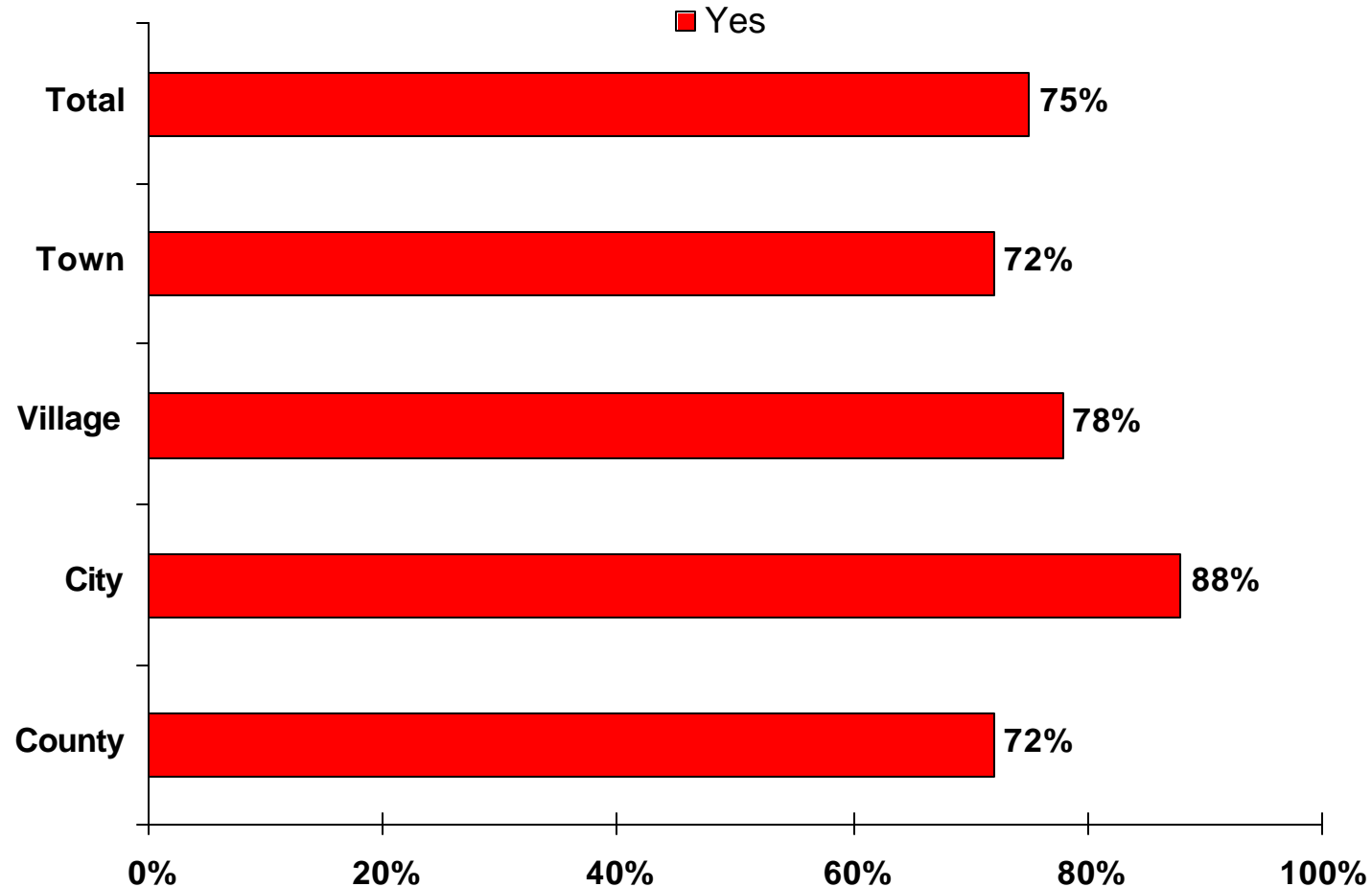


Main Benefits of Compliance*

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Village</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Help with local decisions / planning	45	44	46	58	43
Gain knowledge of current road conditions	26	27	22	23	38
Better able to lobby for state funds	7	5	9	4	14

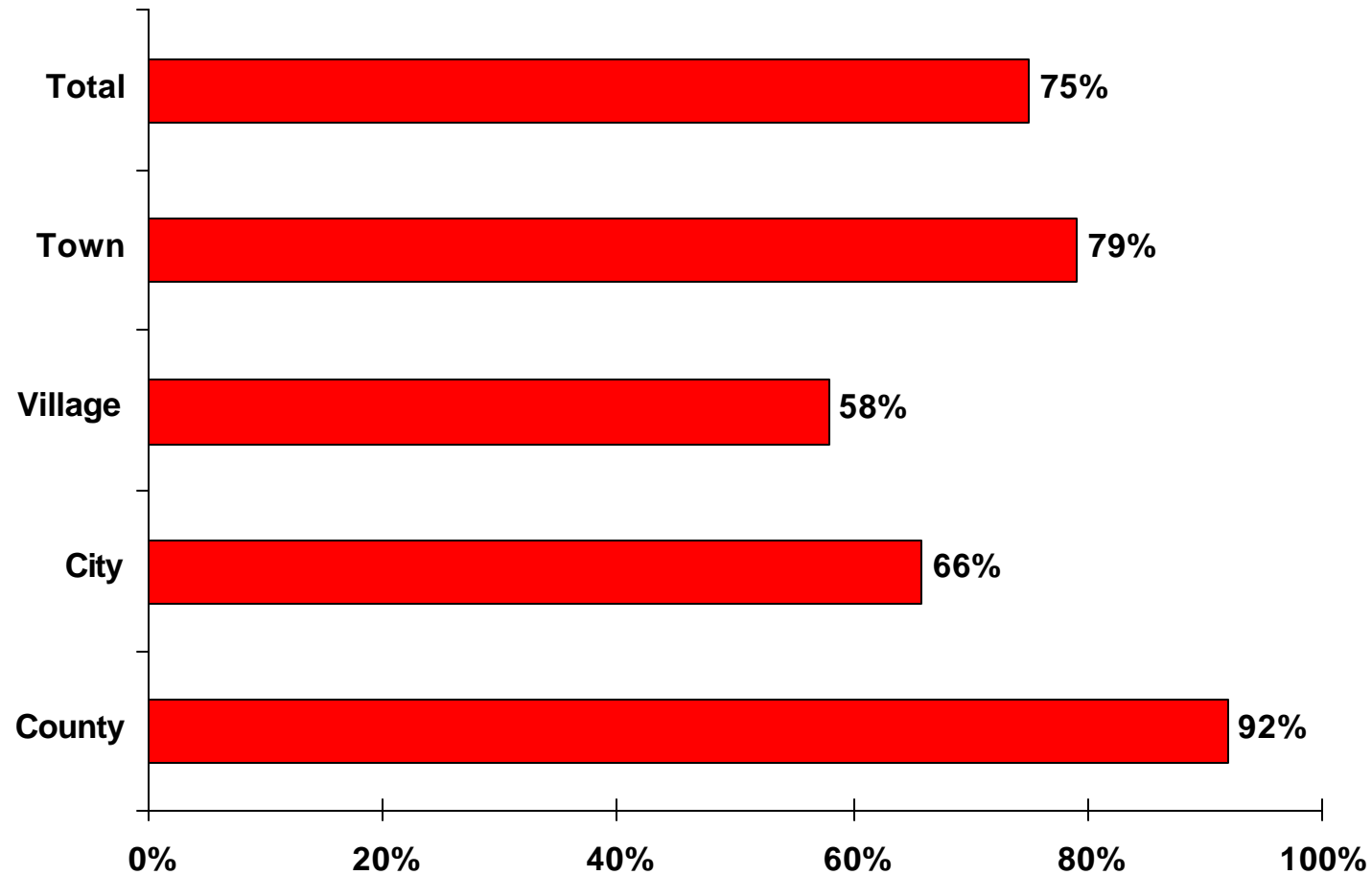
*Only most frequent mentions listed

Proportion Who Would Have Complied -- Regardless of Perceived Benefit



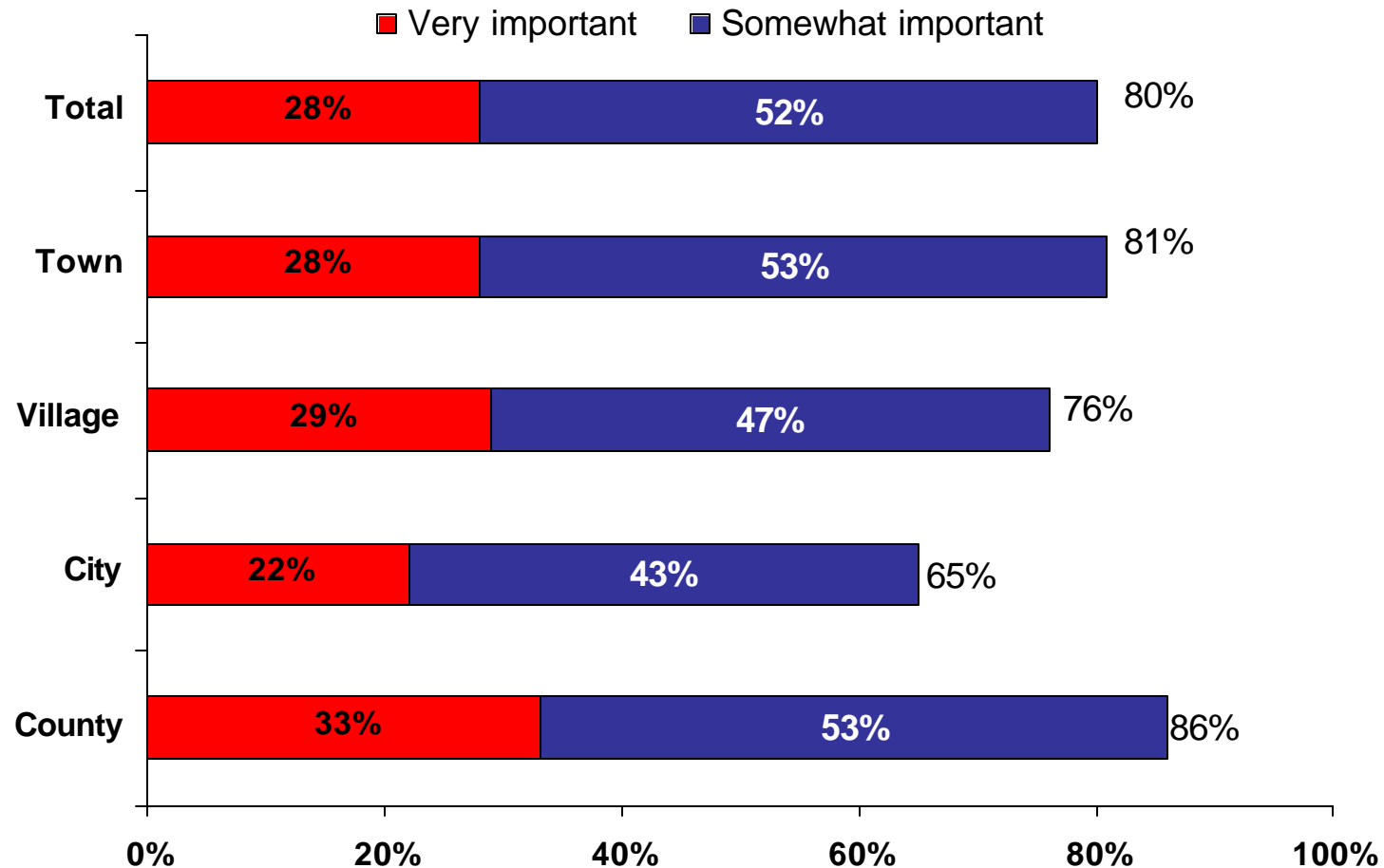
*Based on those who complied and believed the requirement was a benefit to their community

Awareness that Statewide Association Supported Project



Importance of State Association Support of the Project

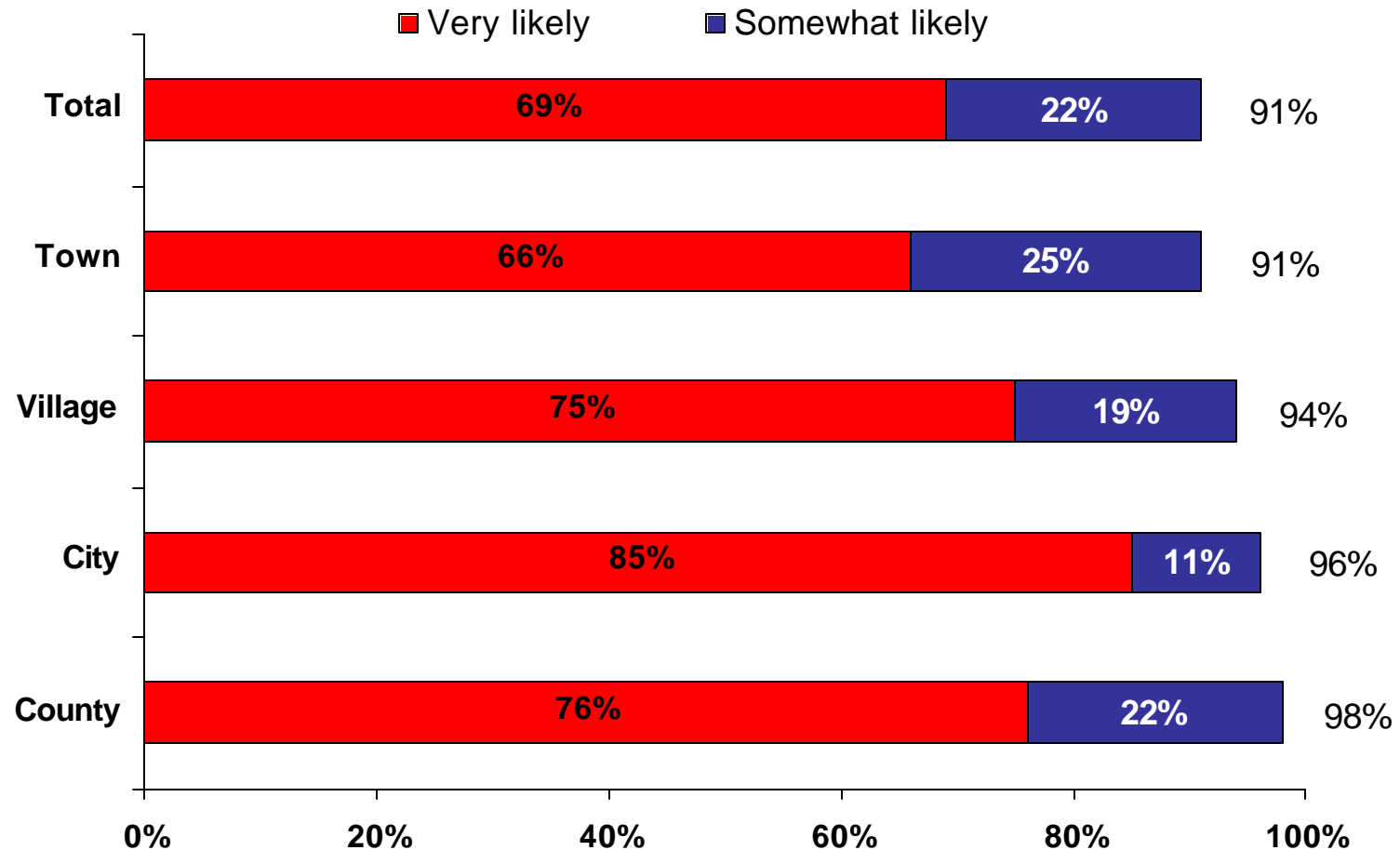
- Proportion Very + Somewhat Important -



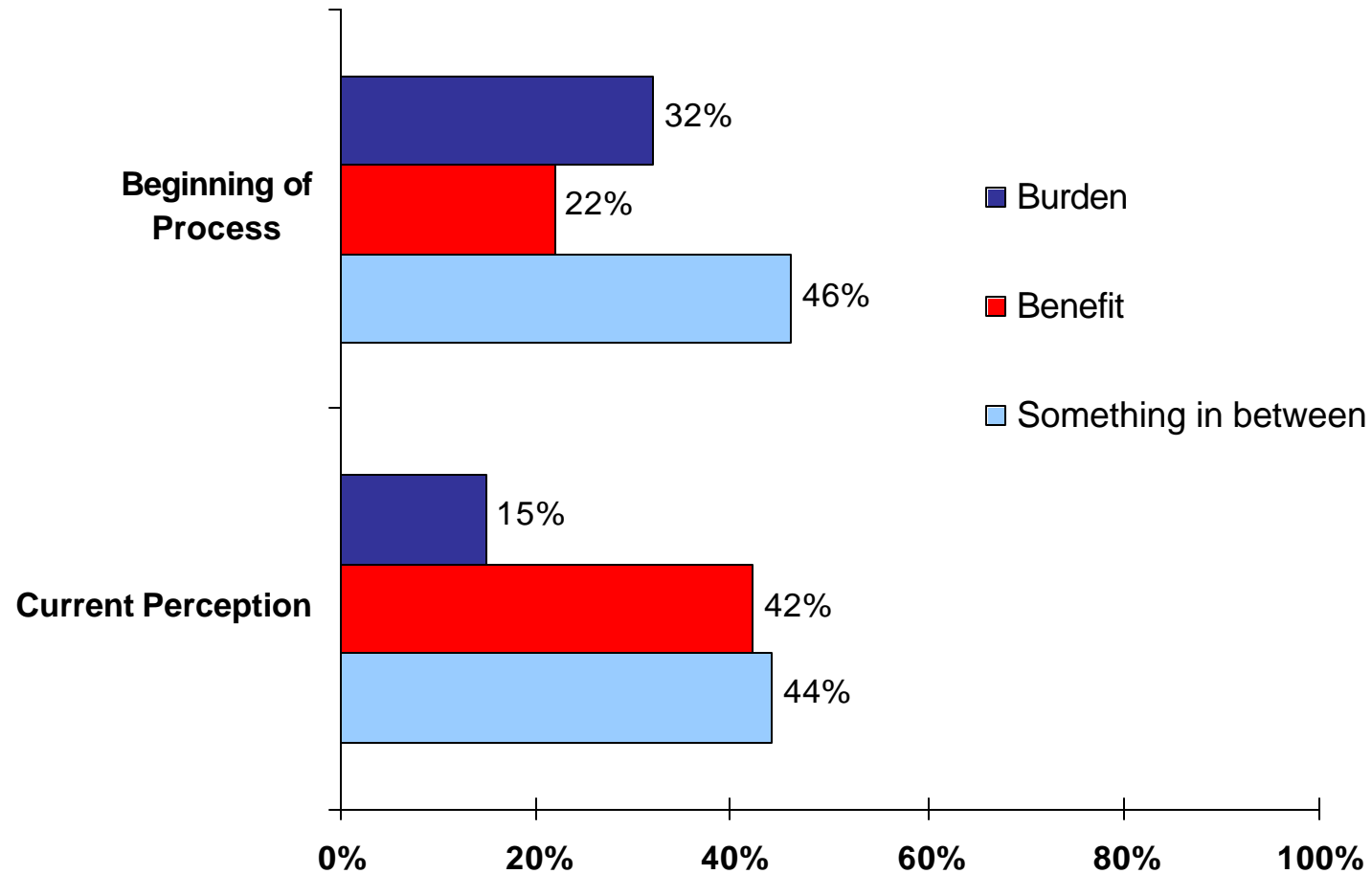
Based on those aware of association support.

Likelihood of Complying with New Regulation in the Future

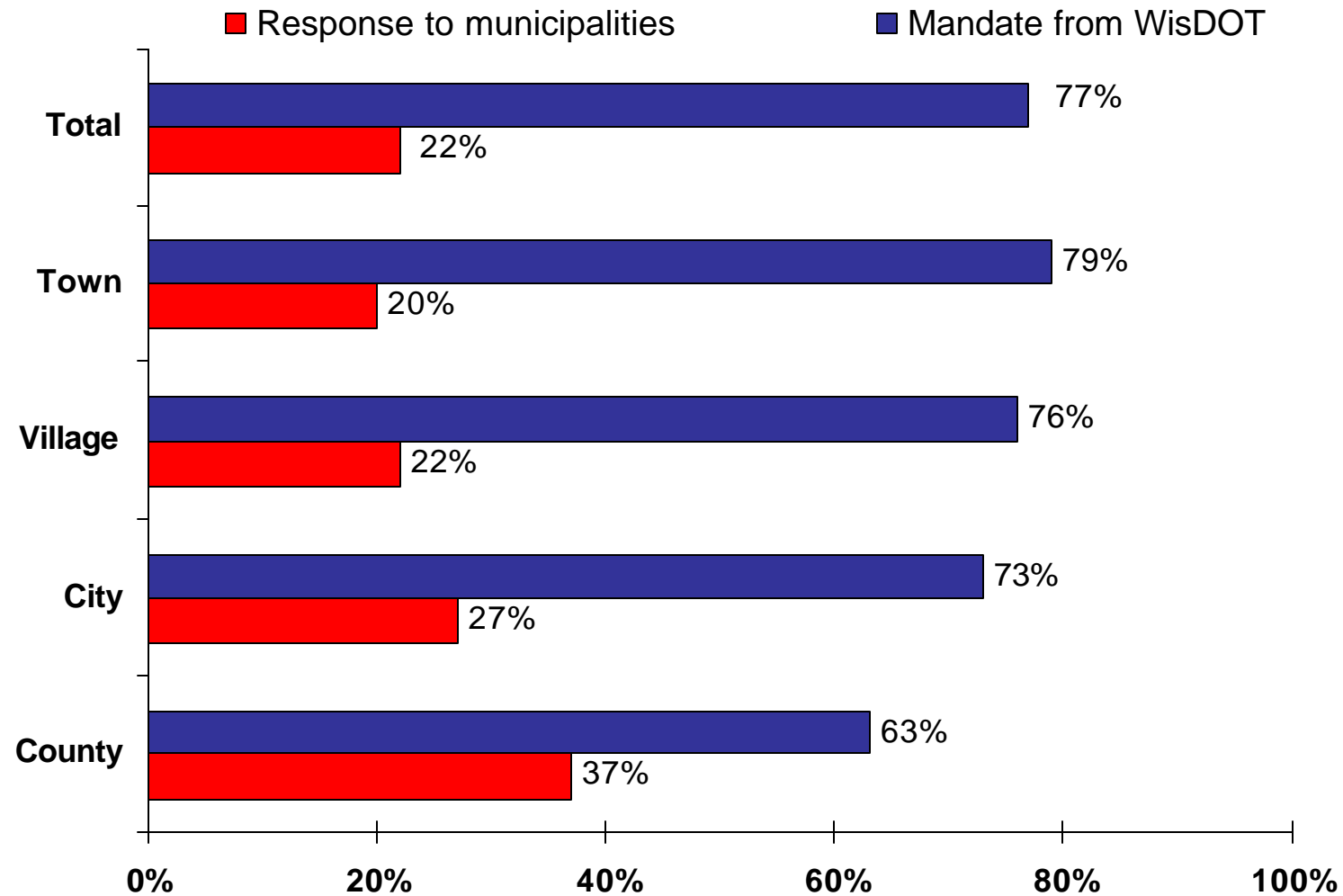
- Proportion Very + Somewhat Likely -



Initial Perception of Requirement



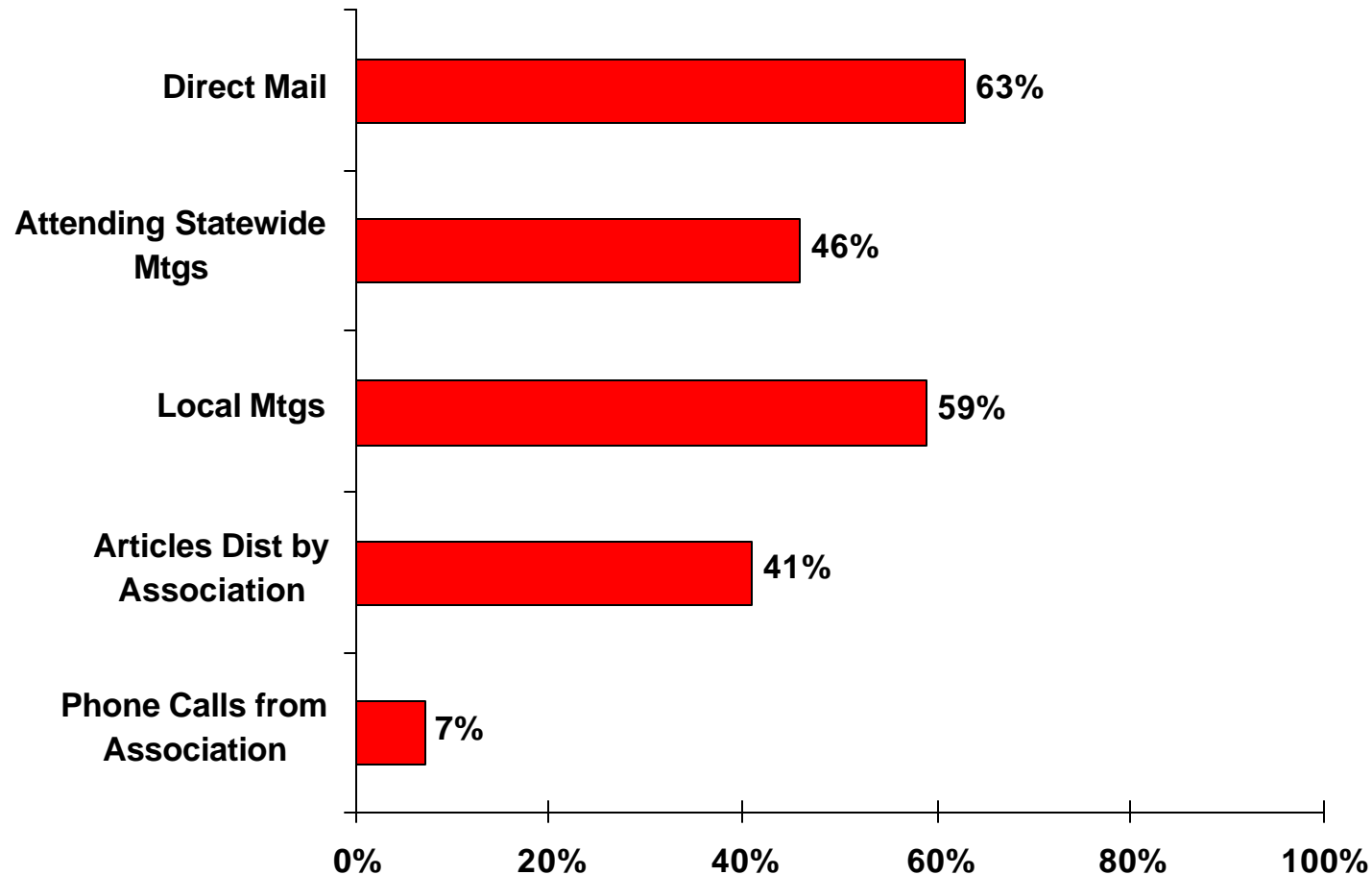
Perception of Requirement: A Mandate from WisDOT or a Response to Desires of Local Municipalities



Importance of Information for Compliance: Summary

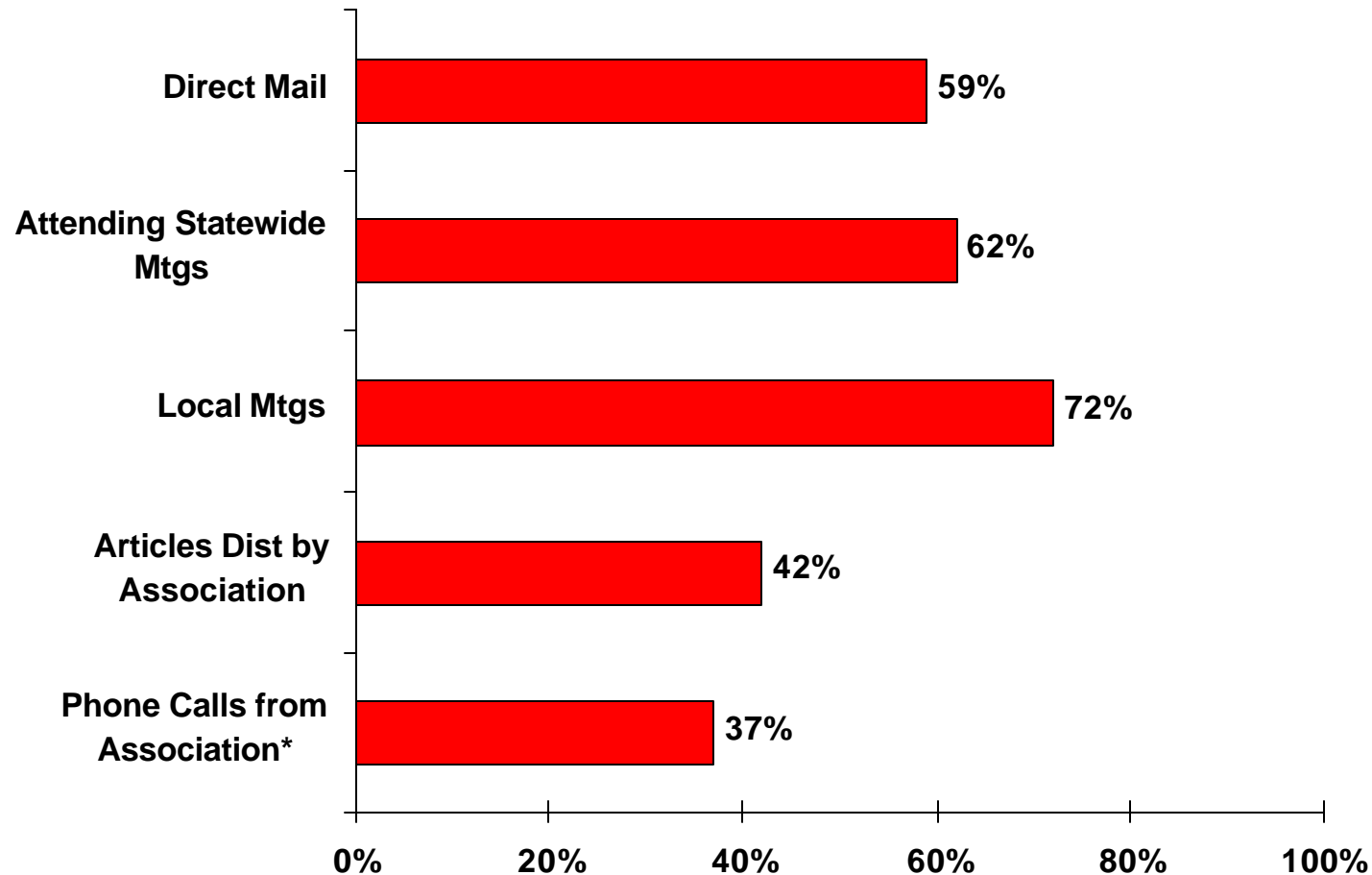
- Proportion Very + Somewhat Important -

-- Total --



Usefulness of Information for Providing Detail and Technical Information : Summary

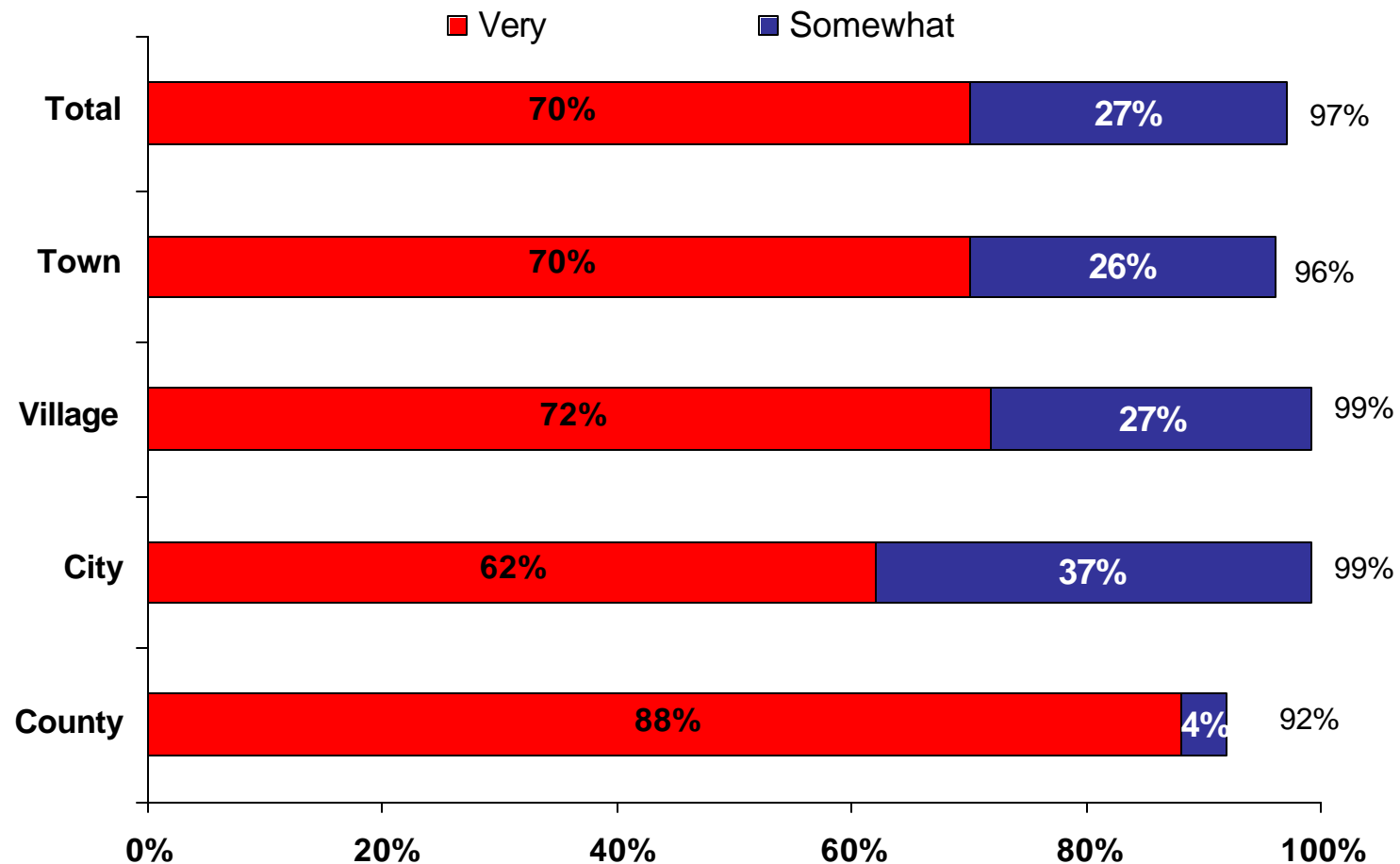
- Proportion Very + Somewhat Useful



* Interpret with caution due to small base size.

Satisfaction with Answers to Questions*

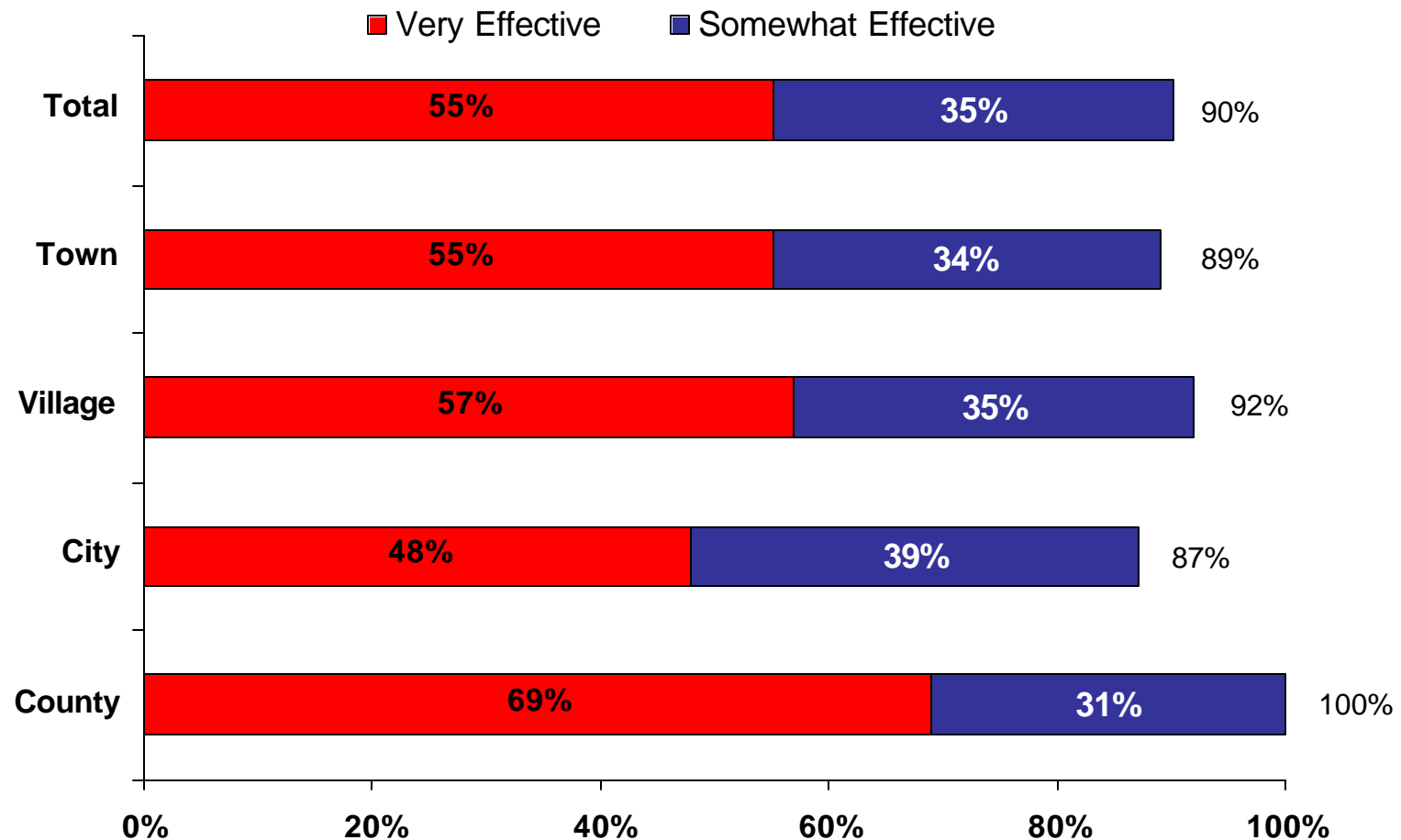
- Proportion Very + Somewhat Satisfied -



*Based to those who had questions and contacted someone for answers.

Effectiveness of Training Sessions

- Proportion Very + Somewhat Effective -



*Based on those who attended PASER and PASERWARE training.

Reasons for Effectiveness Rating of PASER Training

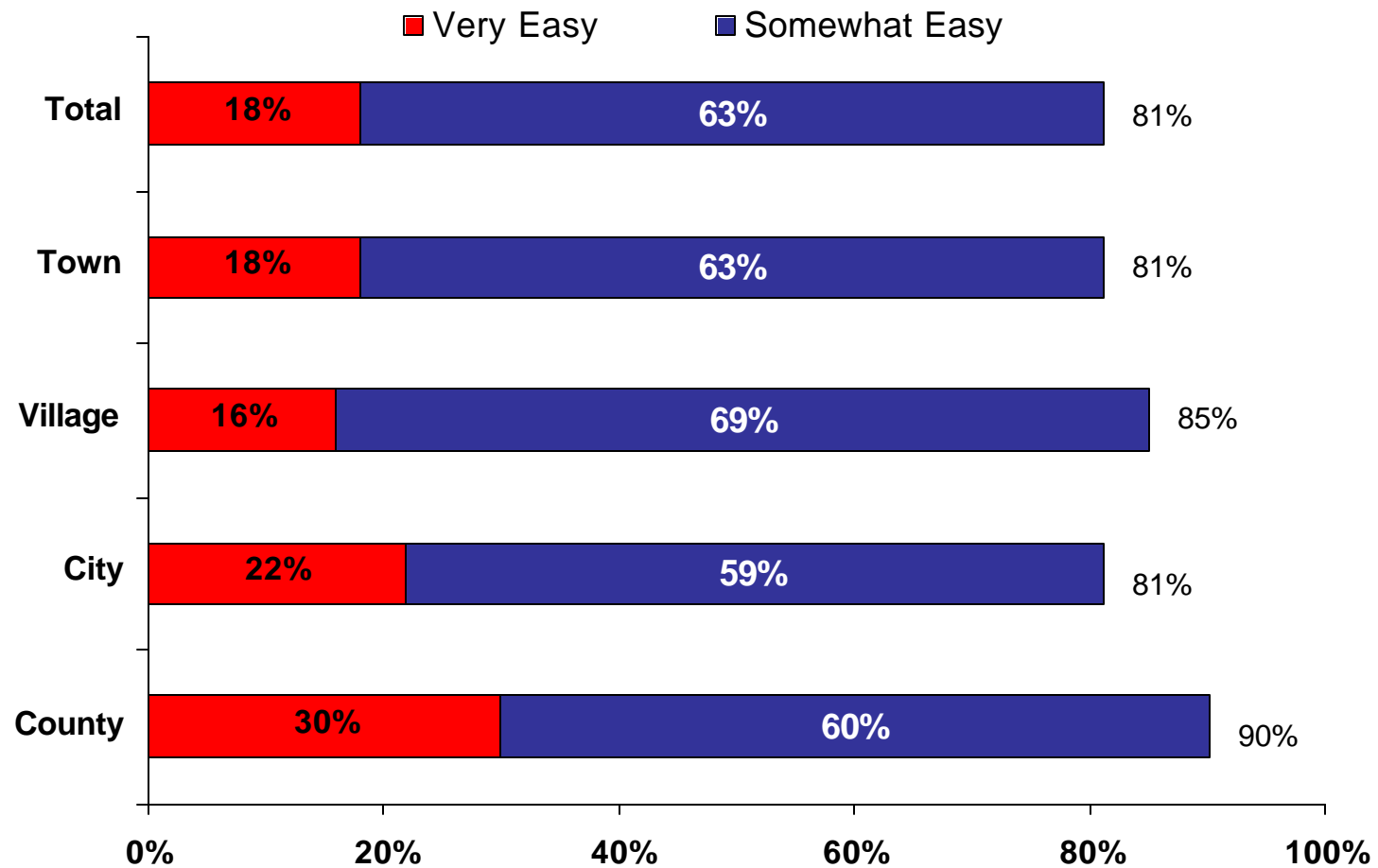
Reasons for Effectiveness Rating

- Among Those Who Said Training Was Not Very +
Not at All Effective -

	<u>%</u>
Confusing / too much at once	21
Software / computer issues	20
No materials / software at session	16
Instructor not knowledgeable	13

Ease of Compliance

- Proportion Very + Somewhat Easy -



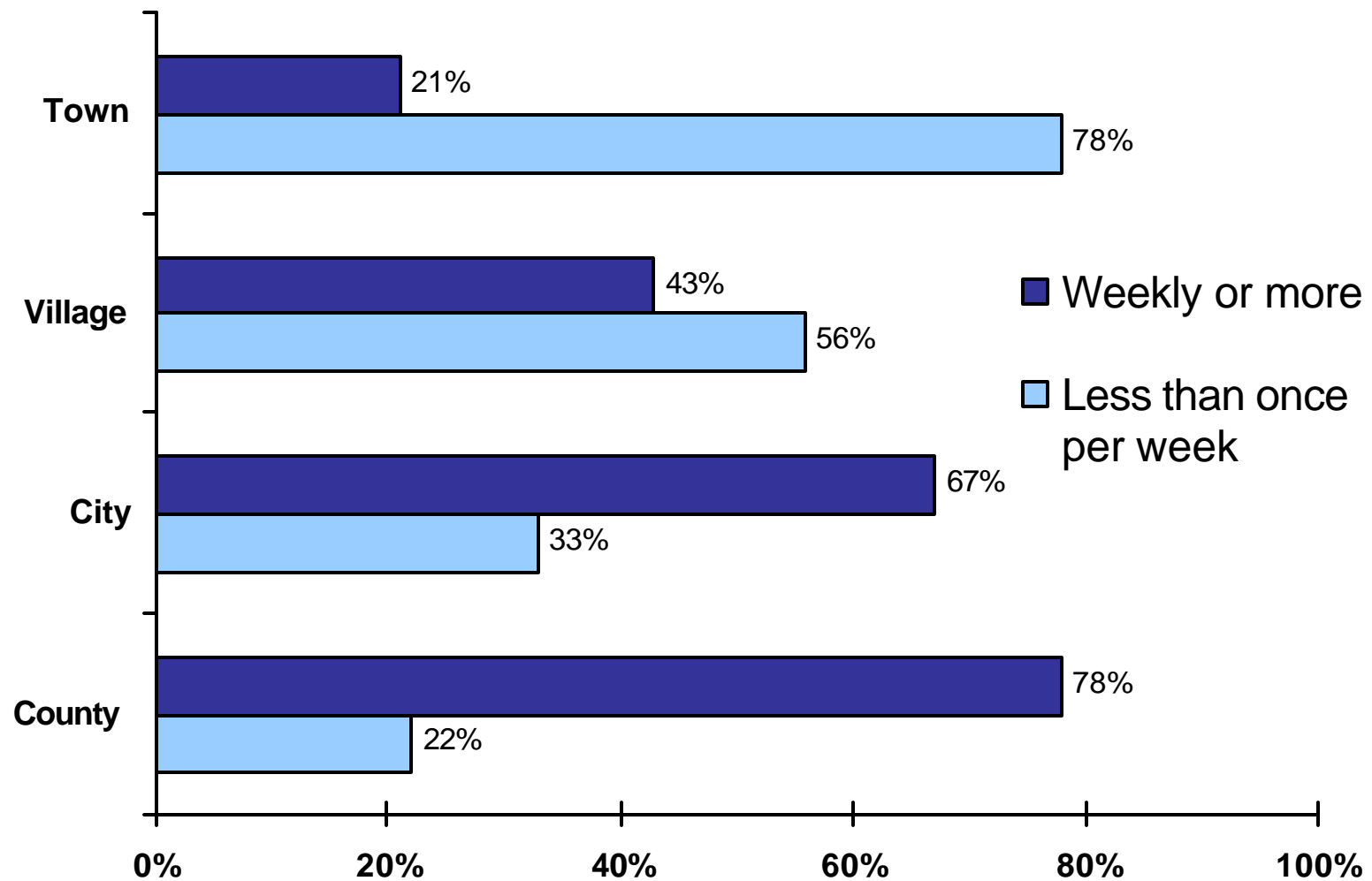
Personnel Involved in Rating of Roads

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Village</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Local paid employee	66	59	80	85	86
Employees of other municipalities	16	20	6	1	12
Outside consultants	13	13	15	18	4
Reg. planning commission	5	7	3	3	2
Mentioned specific position	19	24	10	3	2

Note: Multiple responses possible.

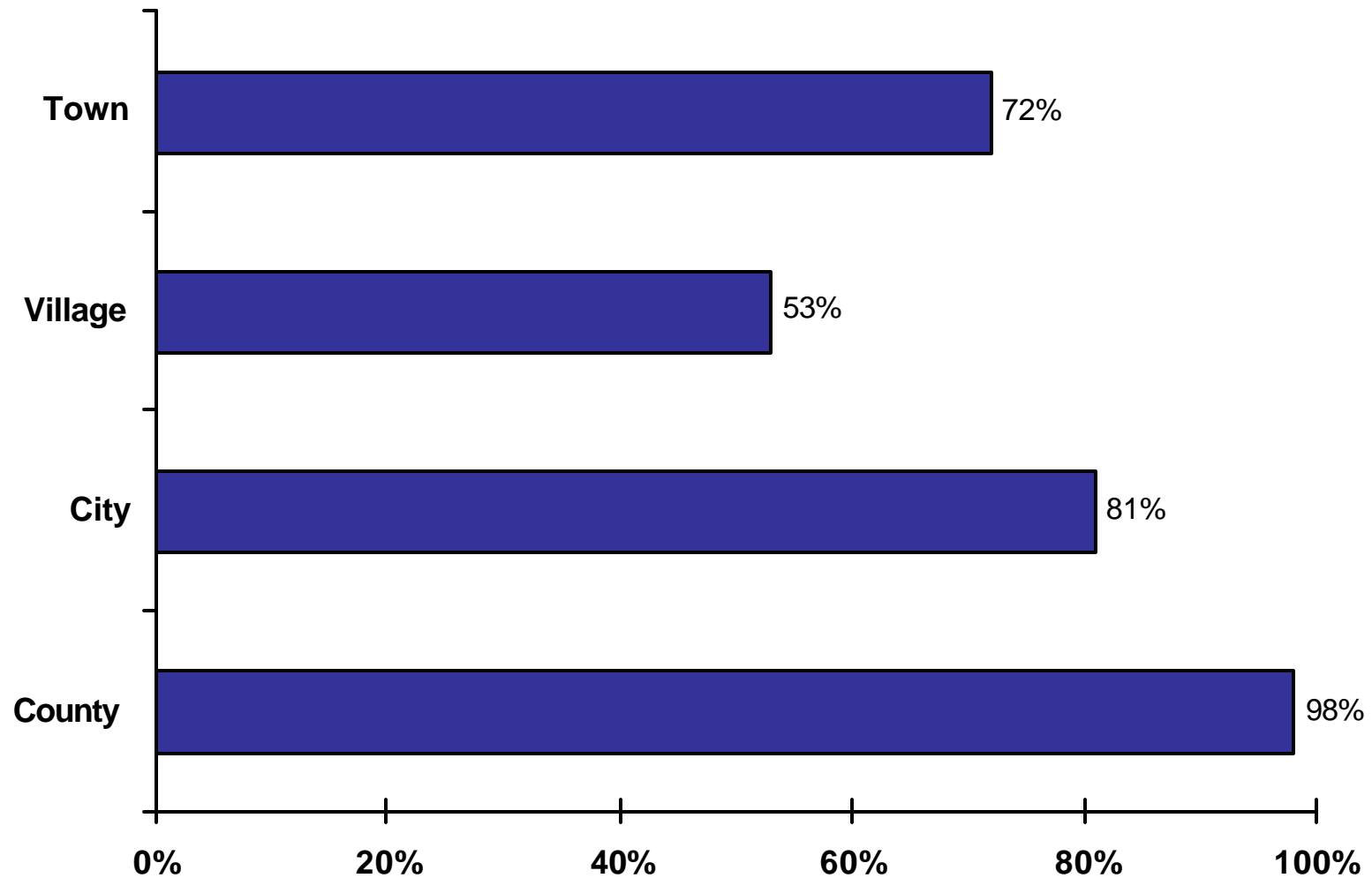
Findings – General Communications

Frequency of Using E-mail to Communicate about Government Business*



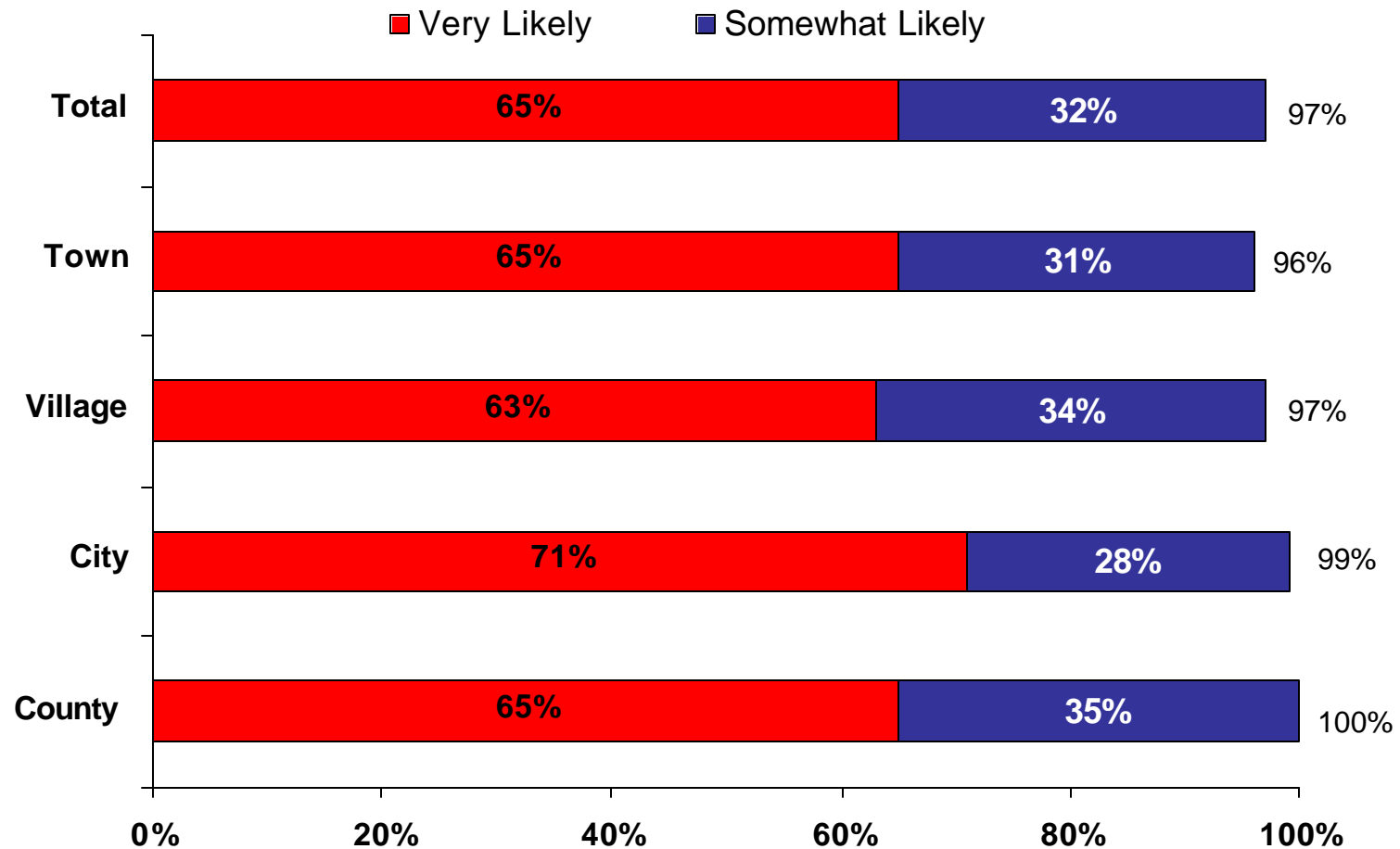
*Based on those who have access to e-mail.

Percentage attending at least one statewide conference per year



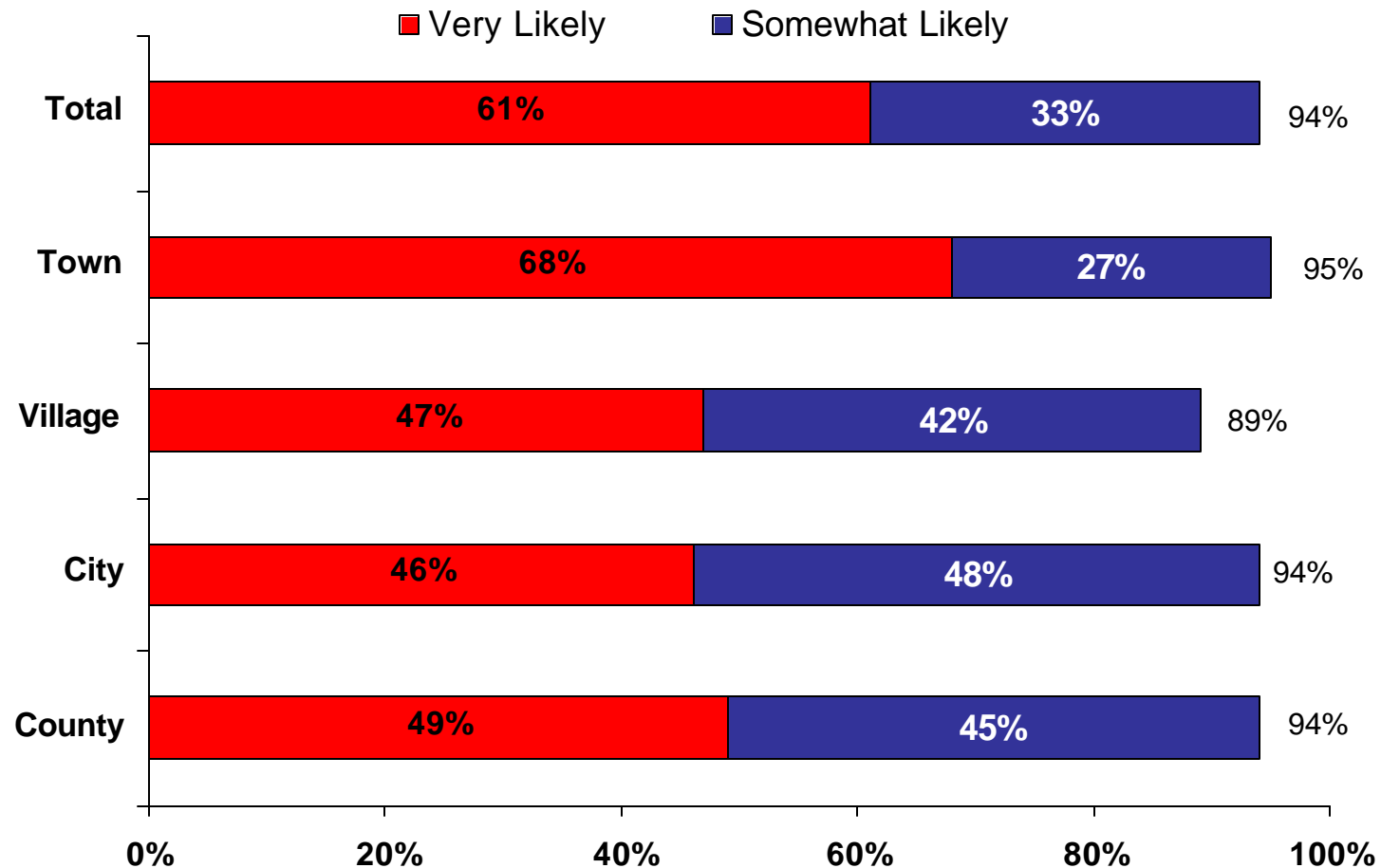
Likelihood of Reading a Newsletter from WisDOT

- Proportion Very + Somewhat Likely -



Likelihood of Reading Magazines and Newsletters Produced by Your Association

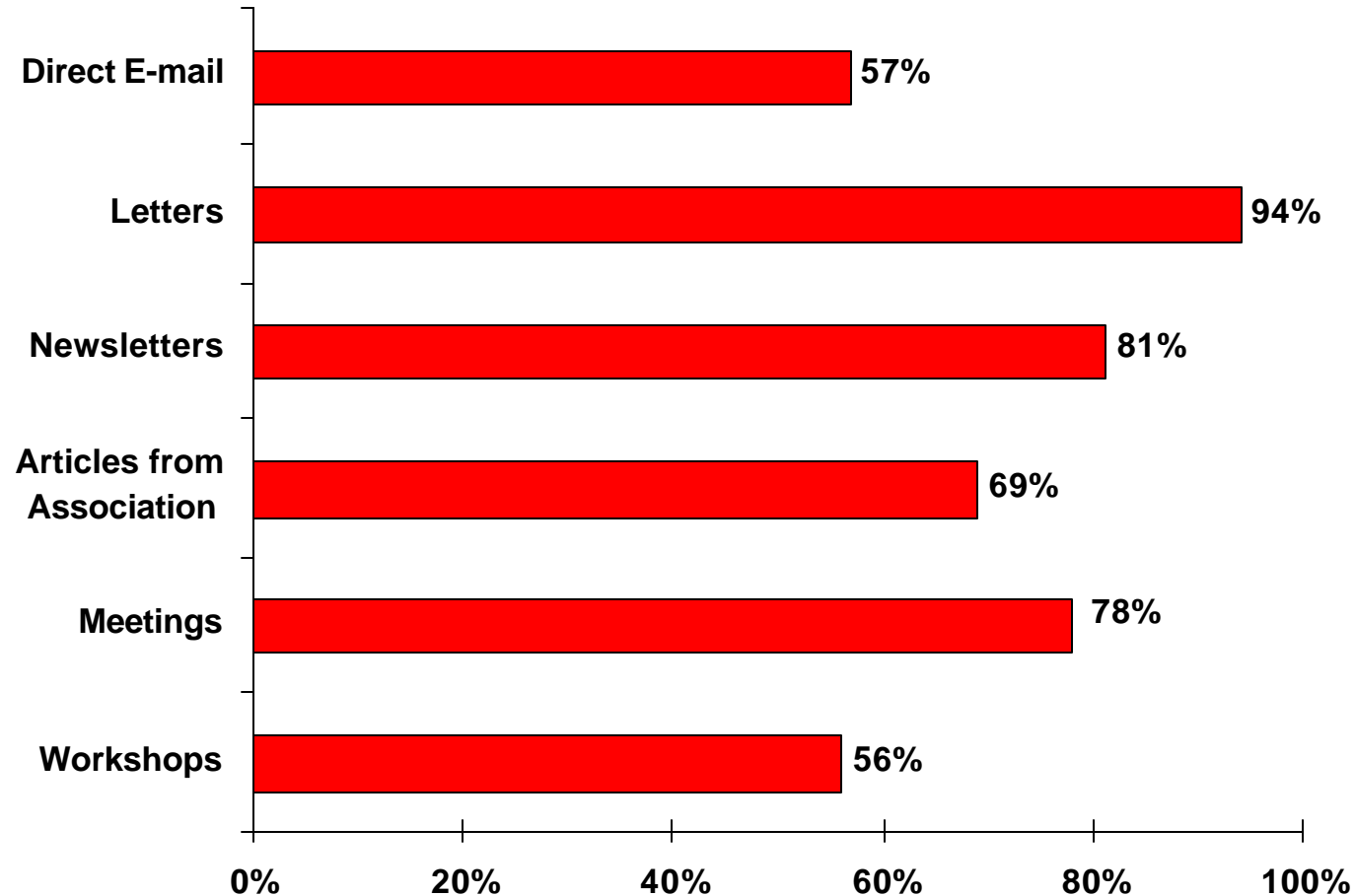
- Proportion Very + Somewhat Likely -



Rating of Methods of Providing Information: Summary

- Proportion Excellent + Very Good -

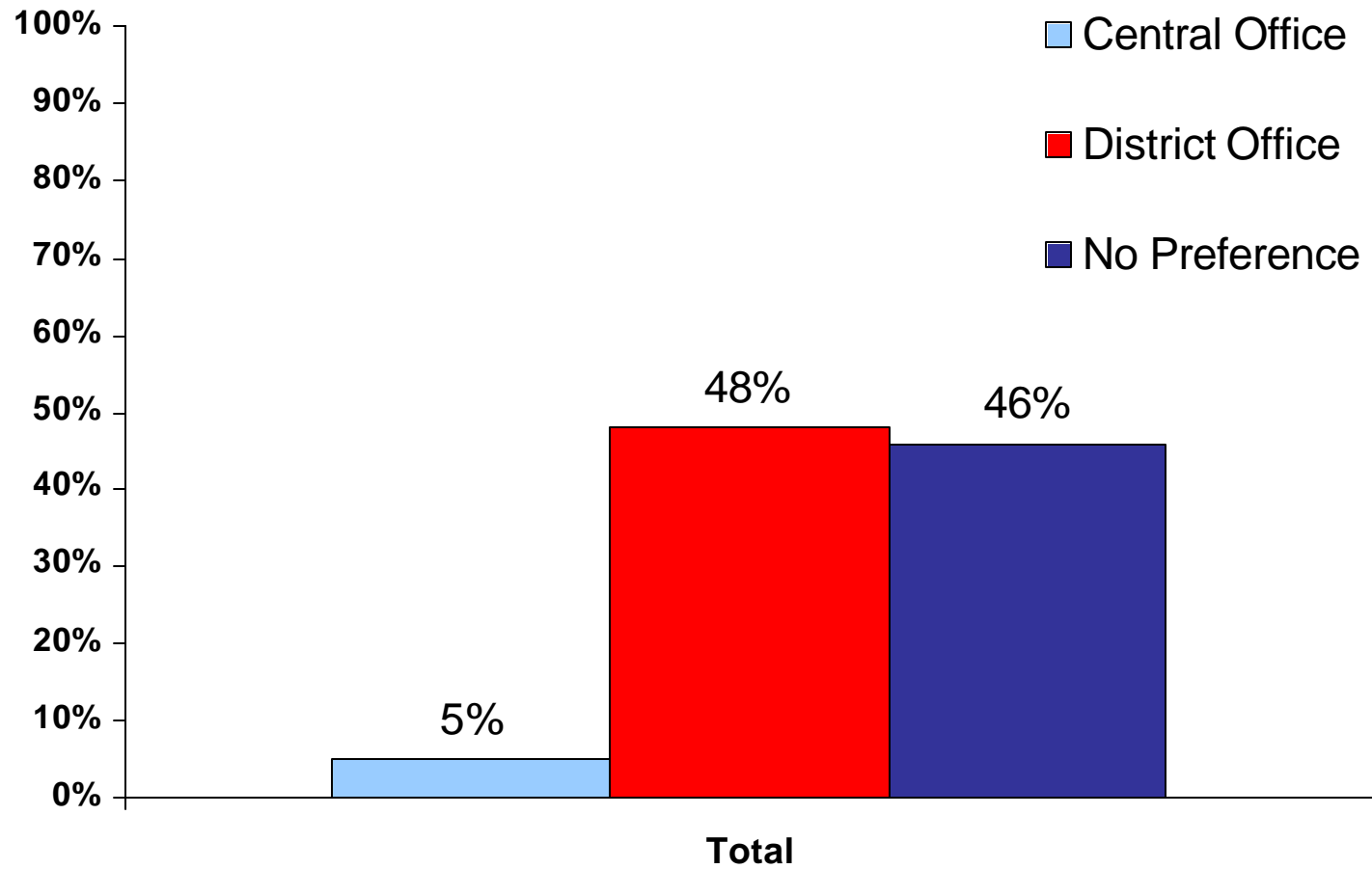
-- Total Sample --



Best Method for Communicating Information Regarding New Rules or Requirements

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Village</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Mail	62	62	74	52	37
E-Mail	22	18	24	39	51
Newsletters	18	21	13	15	8
Articles in association newsletter	15	21	5	2	6
Workshops at statewide conferences	5	6	2	2	10

Preference for DOT Contact



Conclusions and Implications – Local Roads Pavement Rating Program

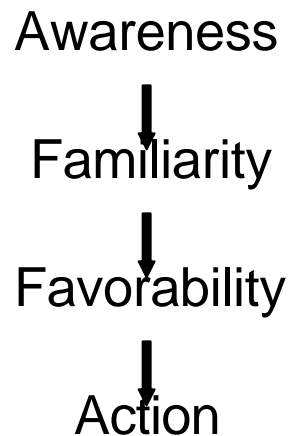
Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Localities throughout Wisconsin complied with the new local roads rating regulation because it was required. Nearly two-thirds (63%) said that they complied because it was required of them. Only 8% complied because they believed it was a benefit for the community.

Implication: Communications for the launch of the local roads rating requirement have successfully generated awareness of the requirement and generated a sense of responsibility among localities in terms of the necessity of complying. Genuine belief in and understanding of the benefits have yet to be fully realized.

Conclusions and Implications

Communications work through an intellectual and emotional process that can be described as a series of steps through which the audience passes as attitudes develop and grow.



While WisDOT seems to have made progress in terms of awareness, familiarity and action, it has yet to make real progress in terms of generating favorable support and belief in the program. This support and belief will be important for future compliance and for support and belief in WisDOT.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Over time and with involvement with the program, support for the new requirement has increased.

Implication: The more experience officials have reporting local road ratings, the more belief and support for the program will grow. To enhance that growth, communications should include “experiential” opportunities that allow the audience to participate and “do” something. “Hands on” communication such as training and practice sessions and participatory sessions at local and statewide conferences and meetings should play important roles in providing persuasive experiences for locality representatives.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Municipalities who relied on employees of their county or regional planning commission to do the actual work are less likely to say they are very likely to comply in the future than are municipalities who used their own employees to rate their local roads.

Implication: Special efforts should be made to communicate with those municipalities that did not use their own employees for the actual rating of the roads. WisDOT, through county officials and the regional planning commissions, should work with municipalities to use their own employees to encourage long term cooperation and compliance.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: PASER and PASERWARE training sessions were well-attended and effective, although there was room for improvement.

Implication: Improvement should include simplification or reduction of the amount of material covered at a session, resolving computer and software issues, making sure material and software are part of the training, and ensuring that instructors are qualified and knowledgeable.

Conclusions and Implications – General Communications

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Statewide associations were important for the success of this program. Three-fourths (75%) of the localities were aware of association support, and 80% of those who were aware said that association support was important to them.

Implication: Association support is important for generating commitment for WisDOT projects and programs. Working with and through statewide associations helps to generate awareness and credibility for WisDOT projects and programs. Continue to use statewide associations to communicate with Wisconsin localities – especially at the county level. Ongoing relationships with associations should be fostered to ensure their support of WisDOT activities and initiatives.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Localities across Wisconsin received information about the new requirement through a variety of sources, including direct mail, local meetings, statewide conferences, and articles in association newsletters and magazines. The usefulness of each of these methods depended on the type of municipality.

Implication: A variety of communication vehicles are necessary to reach representatives across Wisconsin localities. No one type of communication vehicle seems to have the ability to reach all audience members. WisDOT should adopt a “layered” approach to communications. This type of approach employs a variety of different types of communication vehicles to meet the objectives of a specific program.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Nearly all locality representatives (97%) would read a newsletter from WisDOT.

Implications: WisDOT should explore the development of a newsletter as a way of communicating with local representatives across the state. Through a newsletter, WisDOT can generate awareness and support for specific programs and initiatives as well as generate support and belief in the Department overall.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Not all locality representatives have access to e-mail. About two-thirds (67%) of locality representatives currently have access to e-mail. Access is highest among counties (96%) and cities (92%). It is somewhat lower among towns (60%) and villages (75%).

Implication: While e-mail may appear to be an accessible, cost-effective means of communicating with localities, its current limited reach inhibits its functionality. When targeting villages and towns, WisDOT should not rely upon e-mail as an overall communication tool for new programs and regulations. However, when targeting counties and cities, e-mail can be a practical and efficient means of communication, especially in combination with other methods.

Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion: Generally, local representatives would prefer WisDOT contact be through a district office (48%) rather than the central office (5%).

Implication: Recognize the role district offices can play in communicating to local stakeholders and in generating their support for WisDOT programs and initiatives. Nevertheless, communication organization “best practices” suggest that “central office” management and coordination are essential for consistency and clarity. While district offices can play a key role in communicating with local audiences, the WisDOT central office must act as a communications center to coordinate and support all WisDOT communications.